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[Pp. I-IV Contain no textual material]

PREFACE.

121 This book is an attempt to give a systematic account of the Khasi people, their manners and customs, their ethnological affinities, their laws and institutions, their religious beliefs, their folk-lore, their theories as to their origin, and their language.

114 This account would perhaps have assumed a more
• 128 elaborate and ambitious form were it not that the author has been able to give to it only the scanty leisure of a busy district officer. He has been somewhat hampered by the fact that his work forms part of a series of official publications issued at the expense of the Government of Eastern Bengal and Assam, and that it had to be completed within a prescribed period of time.

000 The author gladly takes this opportunity to record his grateful thanks to many kind friends who have helped him either with actual contributions to his material, or with not less valued suggestions and criticisms. The arrangement of the subjects discussed is due to Sir Bampfylde Fuller, lately Lieutenant-Governor of the Province, whose kindly interest in the Khasis will long be remembered by them with affectionate gratitude. The Introduction is from the accomplished pen of Sir Charles Lyall, to whom the author is also indebted for much other help and encou-

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SECTION V.

FOLK-TALES, TRADITIONS AND SUPERSTITIONS.

FOLK-TALES.

773 THE Khasis possess a considerable amount of folk-lore. The
128 tales which will be found reproduced in the original Khasi have been obtained from a collection which was in the possession of the Rev. Dr. Roberts, of Cherrapunji, who very kindly placed it at my disposal. The translations are by U Nissor Singh, Sub-Inspector of Schools, and the author of a Khasi English Dictionary as well as certain other educational works in that language. Dr. Roberts's collections would fill a book; so I have selected only a few of what I consider typical tales. At the instance of Sir Charles Lyall, I have given the Khasi and English side by side. The stories will speak for themselves,
133 but I add a few explanatory notes. The water-fall of Ka Likai
773 is a magnificent cascade in the rainy season; it can best be viewed from the heights of Laitkynsew. The water-fall is situated close to the village of Nongriat, which is approached by a succession of stone steps from the village of Tyrna, just below the Cherrapunji Laitkynsew bridle-path. "Dingiei," which is mentioned in the second tale, is the high hill to be seen on the right-hand side of the Shillong-Cherrapunji road soon after leaving Shillong. The highest point of the range is over 6,000 ft. The third tale contains the well-known story of Ka Pah Syntiew, the fabled ancestress of the Khyrim and Mylliem Siem families. The cave where Ka Pah Syntiew is said to have made her abode is still to be seen in the neighbourhood of Nongkrem. The story of the origin of the Siems of Suhtnga, who afterwards became the Rajas of Jaintiapur, is a well-known tale in the Jaintia Hills. A description of the

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nearly seventy years of age, spoke English a little, and kindly agreed to help by acting as introducer as well as interpreter. The Chowkidar of the bungalow, a Christian Khasi who spoke Hindi tolerably well was however our principal interpreter. Before proceeding to the village, I had studied Roberts' Khasi Grammar and also learnt simple sentences in Khasi necessary for collecting genealogies, kinship terms and connected details, like the inheritance of the ancestral house and lands. This portion of the data was collected entirely through questions and answers in Khasi; the other details were obtained with the help of myntri U Subu Rai and his friends and the Chowkidar, U Hudrington. On important points however, some checking was made, by simple questions in Khasi, which involved definite answers in the affirmative or negative. My students who had accompanied me for training in field studies, repeated some of my observations, in my presence and with my help and guidance.

My best thanks are due to Mr. K. Cantlie, Deputy Commissioner, Khasi and Jaintia Hills, for furnishing me with the letter of introduction to U Subu Rai and for other facilities. His published notes on Khasi law, especially the chapters on inheritance also proved to be of great value in carrying out the enquiries (5). In the subsequent portions of this article, references to the works of Gurdon and Cantlie, will be indicated merely by (G) and (CN) respectively.

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60/ In the genealogies Ka before a name denotes a woman, and U, a man. Hence no special symbols have been used to distinguish sex. Abbreviations used are :—

[128]

d—dead. n.r.—not remembered. n.k.—not known.
d.y.—died young. unm—unmarried. n.i.—no issue.

Unless the village of birth is stated to be otherwise, it is Mawphlang.

Relationship	Kinship term	Term of address	Term of reference
F.	U Kpa	I Kpa or Ko Kpa.	— (a)
Z.	U Khun.	Ko Khun.	—
D.	Ka Khun.	Ko Khun.	—
M.	I Mei.	I Mei.	Ka Kmie. (b)
M.e S.	Mei San.	Ko Mei San.	Ka Kmie San.
M.y S.	Mei Nah.	Ko Mei Nah.	Ka Kmie Nah.
y.S.z. (w.s.)	Khun Ruit.	Ko Khun Ruit.	—
e.S.Z. (w.s.)	Khun Ruit.	Ko Khun Ruit.	—
y.S.D. (w.s.)	,,	,,	—
e.S.D. (w.s.)	,,	,,	—
M.e.B.	Ma Rangbah.	I Ma Rangbah.	U Kni. (c)
M.y.B.	Ma Khynnah.	I Ma Khynnah.	U Kni.
y.S.Z. (m.s.)	Pyrsa	Ko Pyrsa.	—
e.T.Z. (m.s.)	Pyrsa.	Ko Pyrsa.	—
y.S.D. (m.s.)	,,	,,	—
e.S.D. (m.s.)	,,	,,	—
M.e.B.W.	I Nia.	Ko Nia.	Nia.
H.e.S Z.	Pyrsa.	Ko Pyrsa.	—
H.y.S.Z.	,,	,,	—
H.e.S.D.	,,	,,	—
H.y.S.D.	,,	,,	—
M.e.S.H.	Pa San.	Ko Pa San	—

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CHAPTER II

General features of the district

128 2.1 In this chapter a brief note on the geography, population and economy of the district is given in order to provide a perspective and make the report self contained.

133 2.2 **Relief.**—The whole of the district is composed of hill tracts. On the northern and western border these hills take the form of tumbled ranges which run for the most part north and south and have a general height of two to three thousand feet. None of the hills in the central and southern portions of the district has anything rocky or precipitous about them. Their sides are covered with short grasses and from one direction or another, they can generally be negotiated by a man on horseback. There is a high plateau in the centre of the district, the general level of which is not much below 6000 feet though it decreases in height towards east and west.

2.3 **Rivers.**—The high plateau that traverses the centre of the district is the watershed of the hills. The following are the principal rivers. On the west there is the Jadukata or Kynshi river, further east come the Um Maopa and the Bogani which fall into the Surma. The Umngot or Maheskhali, known as the Pyian Gang in the plains of Sylhet, forms for a considerable distance the boundary of the Khasi and Jaintia Hills. On the north the principal rivers are Kakhri, the Digaru and Umiam. Farther west comes the Umkhen, Um Myntang and the Mynriang. All these rivers possess the characteristics usually associated with hill streams. The beds are rocky and gravelly; the currents swift and after heavy rains even small streams come down in spate. The rivers of the district are not used for traffic to any appreciable extent.

135 2.4 **Minerals.**—The Geological products of economic value are lime and coal. From the earliest days of British rule, the lime quarries of Khasi Hills formed one of the principal attractions of Sylhet, drawing a large number of Europeans to that district. The lime quarries are situated all along the southern face of the hills. Coal is found both in the cretaceous and nummulitic formations. The largest deposits of nummulitic coal are found at Cherrapunjee, Laitryngew, Mawlong, Mustoh, Mawsynram, Mawdon, Thanjinath, Lakadong and Narpuh. Cretaceous coal is found in Maobchlarkar, Barsora, Wapung Laitkynsew and in the Langrin field.

137 2.5 **Forests.**—The district exhibits a varied flora reflecting the variations in the physical features, configuration of the ground, adaphic factors and climatic gradient. In the pine zone, covering areas between 2500'- 6200' elevation are found the pines, birch, schima, oak, beech, etc. The evergreen hardwood zone, which forms belt along the foothills contains useful hardwood species of which the most important species are sal, nahor, cham, chap, gomari, etc. The dry grassy belt covering the lower slopes roughly between 500'-2500' elevation form the ideal ground for graziers.

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CHAPTER IV

Result of the survey

4.1 **Distribution of sample.**—It has already been mentioned in Chapter I that purposive selection of ten villages from border area, eight villages from the project area and a random selection of ten villages from the general area, were made for intensive investigation.

It is not our intention to devote this Chapter on the specific needs of individual villages. Some common salient features of the villages relating to the situation of the villages, diseases occurring there and marketing, communication, educational and medical facilities obtainable in those villages are briefly described below for the purpose of giving intelligence into the condition of the sample villages.

The following table shows the group-wise distribution of the sample villages, their location by thana and subdivision and the number of families inhabiting each village at the time of the survey.

TABLE B-I

Sample villages in United K. & J. Hills and their location

Group	Name of villages	Thana	Subdivision	No. of families
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
Border area—	1. Lumshnong ..	Jowai ..	Jowai ..	63
	2. Amki —	Dawki .	Do ..	18
	3. Syndai ..	Do ..	Do ..	133
	4. Darrang ..	Do ..	Do ..	104
	5. Lyngkhat ..	Do ..	Do ..	28
	6. Nongjri ..	Cherra ...	Shillong ...	229
	7. Bholaganj ...	Do ..	Do ..	84
	8. Shella .	Do ..	Do ..	236
	9 Mawdon .	Do ..	Do ..	51
	10. Bajat ..	Do ..	Do ..	65

311 The total number of fragments in 697 holding in Border of area
423 is 2,540 giving an average of 3.64 fragments per holding, that in
462 holdings in project area is 1,080 which gives on the average
182 2.34 fragment per holding, while in General area 165 holdings comprise of 443 fragments, *i.e.*, 2.68 fragment per holding. A comparison of the above figures with the average fragment figures of 1.61, 4.50, 4.40 and 3.73 per holding in Mikir Hills, Darrang, Sibsagar and Lakhimpur districts respectively goes to show that incidence of fragmentation in this district is higher than that in Mikir Hills but less than that in other districts.

It will be seen from table D4.1 at the appendix that in the small holding group (less than 3 acres) average number of fragments per holding is 1.99 in Border, 1.60 in Project and 2.01 in General area. The average sizes in the corresponding holding group being 1.36 acres 1.47 acres and 1.55 acres, in Border area, Project area and General area, the average size of fragments in the respective area works out at ·68 acres, ·92 and ·76 acres. Similarly it will be seen that average sizes of fragments for medium holding group are, in Border area 1.61 acres (average size of medium holding 5.63 acres) in Project area 1.85 acres (averages size of holding 4.95 acres) and in General area 1.51 acres (average size of holding 5.02 acres), those for large holding group being 3.15 acres, 3.06 acres and 3.49 acres respectively against the average large holding sizes of 19.55 acres, 15.25 acres and 12.53 acres in the respective area.

FARMS

241 6.5 The operating unit in the rural agricultural system is in most
592 cases the family farm. Functions, entrepreneur, capital and manual labour as regards to the agricultural operations in these farms are done through a joint effort of the family unit. Rarely permanent farm servants are maintained though employment of casual labourers are employed during the busy seasons.

[128] In this enquiry a farm has been defined as comprising of all agricultural land operated by a single family with or without employment of labour. The family may or may not have the right of permanent occupancy and inheritance over the farm land operated by it, and in this sense the farm is distinguised from holding which comprises of such land only over which the family concerned possesses right of occupancy and inheritance.

8·5—In the following paragraphs we have reproduced the yield rates of different crops, calculated on the basis of area harvested and total produces reported by the cultivators. For assesment of correct yield rates it is necessary to conduct a scientifically designed crops cutting survey which in view of its largeness in magnitude and other complexities associated with the type of experiments, could not be fitted in with the programme of the present survey. It is admitted that the yield estimates worked out by us are proved to be subjected to the usual limitations of this type of data.

Yield

1. **Paddy.**—It will be seen from table above that average yields of paddy per acre for Border area, General area and Project area are respectively 8.38 maunds, 12.92 maunds and 12.60 maunds and for the district as a whole it comes to 11.65 maunds though there are cases where maximum yield goes to above 18 maunds per acre. Thus it is seen that the average yield is much less than the average yield for the State of Assam (plain district) which is above 18 maunds per acre. Average yield in Border area is evidently much smaller. Apart from low fertility of land, another reason for this low average is that in a number of villages selected from Border area such as Syndai, Amki and Lumshnong, there was widespread havoc to standing crops was caused by wild elephants.

2. **Potato.**—The average for the three areas comes to 21·61 maunds per acre which is in contrast to the State average of above 40 maunds per acre. Our estimate has in fact been lowered due to inclusion of a few villages in the foot hills where potatoes don't grow well, otherwise in a number of high altitude villages, yield per acre well exceeded 40 maunds. The average for Border area is rather too low. Apart from unsuitability of Border land of high altitude potatoes another reason for this low average is that during the reference year the crop suffered from widespread incidence of pests and insects.

3. **Orange.**—yield of orange in Border area, Project area and General area was found to be 5. 27 luties or 5396 numbers against 16.76 luties or 17162 numbers and 2.80 luties or 2867 numbers respectively Thus the average yield in Border area, even considering the mixed nature of some gardens is much low. The reasons are obvious.

4. **Betelnut**—Average yield per acre from Border area, Project area and General area was found to be 2.93 luties (18752 numbers), 4.11 luties (26304 numbers) ann 3.03 luties (19392 numbers) respectively bringing the average for all the three areas to 2.95 luties per arce.

5. **Betel leaf.**—Average yield per acre works out at 17·15 kuris, 50.64 kuris and 24 kuris in Border area, Project area and General area respectively. Thus in Booder area the average is much lower. This is due to the fact that most of the gardens remained unplucked for want of market for leaf.

511 It is seen that the per family average annual expenditure is Rs.909·00 nP. in Border areas, Rs.1008 00 nP. in Project area and Rs.828·00 nP. in General area. The per family annual net income in the respective area being Rs.852·86 nP., Rs.988·84 nP, and Rs.949·51 nP. it follows that the budget of the average family is deficit in all the areas. [426] This deficit is usually made up either by restricting the consumption expenditure during the lean months of the agricultural year or by taking loans.

221 The field work of the survey was started during the month of February, 511 *i.e.*, hardly after two months, of harvesting of winter paddy and during the harvesting period of cash crops like orange, betelnut, potatoes, etc. During this period people get money through the sale proceeds and naturally they [114] were tempted to spend comparatively higher amount on food. In fact, it was made clear during investigation that as lean months are approaching when people did not have money to purchase food articles, they used to lead a very austere life. This period is particularly very hard for the Border people because unlike people of other two areas they do not have [128] even paddy in store. As the above figures of annual expenditure of a [125] family were calculated on the basis of information collected for one month preceeding the date of investigation, in respect of food and non-food articles, and for one year in respect of miscellaneous items, there is every likelihood of the average per family expenditure on food and non-food articles being over-estimated.

128 As in the case of income, consumption of articles produced at home 511 or at farm as well as those received out of the goods, services and gift and loan were valued in money terms on the basis of the local average retail prices in respect of the commodities concerned. Thus even firewood and other wild vegetables and fishes obtained by fishing were valued in terms of money. Of the total average expenditure on food, the food articles obtained in kind and consumed at home account for about 18 per cent in Border area, 53 per cent in Project area and 57 per cent in General area. Thus the share of food articles obtained in kind and consumed at home to the annual expenditure of a family is very low in Border area. This is natural because they depend almost exclusively on cash crop cultivation.

511 Out of the total expenditure, food account for about 68 per cent in Border area, 67 per cent in Project area and 73 per cent in General area. In all the areas cereals alone took the bulk of the expenditure on food, *i.e.*, 66 per cent, 75 per cent and 81 per cent in the respective areas

It is seen that expenditure on pulses, vegetables and milk are very low. In fact only a few of the Tribal villagers take pulses, milk and vegetables. Rice and fish or meat are the only items of the dishes of most of the villages.

Among non-food articles fuel and light accounted for 6 per cent in Border area, 5 per cent in Project area, and 5 per cent in General area. Khasis are heavy chewers of betelnut and this accounted for 5 per cent of total annual expenditure in border area, 4 per cent in Project area and about 3 per cent in General area while tobacco and tea in tea-stall accounted for about 5 per cent, 4 per cent and 4 per cent respectively of the total annual expenditure in the three areas. Expenditure on liquor

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Khasi Kinship Terms in four Dialects

By U. R. Ehrenfels, Ph D. (Vienna)

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II. The List of the Kinship Terms
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I. Introductory Remarks

601
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Professor K. P. Chattopadhyay (Calcutta University) published in 1941 an analysis of Khasi kinship terms [1] based on eight genealogies which he collected in the Mawphlang area, about sixteen miles south-west of Shillong [2]. He discussed in this paper a previous publication by Professor Hodson [3] where special features of certain Khasi kinship terms are held to prove the pre-existence of a dual system in a one-time Khasi social order and he quotes also the late Rai Bahadur S. C. Roy's work on Khasi kinship [4] and lists of Assamese relationship terms, contained in "Census of India Reports" [5] and Khasi terms in U Nissor Singh's "Khasi-English Dictionary" [6], P. R. T. Gurdon's monograph on the Khasi [7] and in Sir Keith Cantlie's "Notes on Khasi Law" [8]. Discussing these previously published papers, Chattopadhyay arrives at the conclusion that Hodson's hypothesis of a dual organization in a hypothetical former Khasi society was not justified [9].

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The present paper, however, does not enter into discussion of this

[1] Chattopadhyay (1941).
[2] Ibid., p. 1.
[3] Hodson (1921).
[4] Roy (1921).
[5] McSwiney (1911), pp. 74/75. The Census Report of 1891, quoted by Chattopadhyay (1941), p. 1, is not available to me at the time of writing.
[6] Nissor Singh (1906).
[7] Gurdon (1914).
[8] Cantlie (1934).
[9] Chattopadhyay (1941), pp. 27, 35.

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question and indeed has been compiled without knowledge of Professor CHATTOPADHYAY's work, and before he very kindly sent a private copy of this work, which had not been available to me previously.

The present paper offers data on the following subjects:

1. Khasi kinship terms from the Mawshai Khasi plateau-area in the Khyrim State, about 20 to 30 miles south-east of Shillong, which are in some minor details different from the Mawphlang data, collected by CHATTOPADHYAY, south-west of Shillong;
2. Comparative data from the Wár-Khasi;
3. from the plateau-area of Jowai in the Jaintia [10] Hills, and
4. from the Wár-Jaintia;
5. Aspects of the Khasi kinship terms, with special reference to the matrilineal order of society, and to the respective position of women and men there, especially the particular consideration which the biological relationship through the father receives in kinship terminology, in spite of the emphasis on the matrilineal structure in Khasi society (comp. term No. 1 of the list and its discussion in para 3/*b* of the present paper, on p. 408).

The data were collected in field researches to which I was enabled by two Research Grants for comparative studies in matrilineal civilizations of India, given by the Viking Fund Inc. (now: Wenner-Gren Foundation for Anthropological Research) in New York, during the periods 1949-50 and 1951-52. My gratefulness to the foundation for enabling me to carry out these field researches, as well as to the University of Madras, for granting me Sabbathical leaves for the same purpose, is here once more recorded.

My research programme was based on the first tentative working hypothesis, laid down in my book "Mother-right in India" [11], but includes also various other aspects of study which have not been pre-planned, or even considered there [12], as for instance also the present comparative study of kinship terms in areas of four Khasi dialects and their special significance to the Khasi matrilineal social system. The material was collected during a five weeks house-to-house study in the recently founded Plateau Khasi village Maw Syn Jri, during April and May 1950. This village consisted mostly of houses, owned by Khasi elder sisters and inhabited by them, with their families, after they had left the ancestral home in the main village Kharang, about one mile across the valley on the western side of the new settlement. The ancestral family houses there were in the possession of either the mother, or, if she was no more alive, the youngest daughter of the family, the *ka khun khaddu* [13].

[10] Jaintia, (Pnár or "Synteng") are the Khasi speaking eastern neighbours of the Khasi proper. As among the Khasi, so also among Jaintia the people in the cool plateau highlands are in many ways different from those who settled in the luscious tropical rainforests of the southern slopes, now situated just north of the East Pakistan frontier: — the so-called Wár-country, where economy is mainly based on pan-leaf gardening.

[11] EHRENFELS (1941).

[12] EHRENFELS (1950/*A*), (1950/*B*), (1950/*C*), (1950/*D*), (1950/*E*), (1951/*A*), (1951/*B*).

[13] GURDON (1914), pp. 83, seq., CANTLIE (1934), p. 11.

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III. Explanations

1. General

124 Most of my informants were illiterate. The spelling of the terms was
128 checked and corrected by my English-speaking and writing Khasi- and
601 Pnár- friends, mentioned in para one, to whom thanks are being here once more expressed. All responsibility for spelling mistakes, however, which may have slipped into this list has of course to be borne by me.

Blanks (—) or question marks (?) in one of the columns do not necessarily mean that there is no word used, by the respective group, for the particular term. They more often indicate that my informants did not use, or know, the particular term, or that I failed to enquire about it in a
[114] manner sufficiently clear to my informants. This is particularly true of general terms, partly or fully corresponding to English general terms, such as parents or grand-parents, or the terms No. 9/*a* and *b*, 13, 15/*a*, 19-21, and 26, which were partly explained to me, by Khasi friends in Shillong, where I stayed some time after completion of field-work during the rainy season. Hence I could no more return for verification to the little accessible Wár-villages in the steep southern slopes. Although I am planning to utilise a future opportunity for such checking up, I am yet publishing the present results in the hope that they may thus become accessible to field-workers among other S. E.-Asiatic, and especially Austro-Asiatic speaking peoples.

193 All terms which are equal for both sexes (cf. Nos. 10, 11, 18, 19, etc.)
601 are used with *ka* and *u* respectively. These sexdetermining preposed articles,
128 as also the honorific *i* are specially mentioned in the list, only if this is essential for the understanding of the respective terms as in Nos. 3-5, 7, 8, or 10.

2. Special

601 Term No. 1 — to give birth or beget (*kha*) signifies also relatives on the paternal side as in *para kha* (paternal cousins No. 9/*c*), in contradistinction to *para kur*, 9/*b*, (lit. : cousins of the clan), i. e. maternal cousins, since the clan is a matrilineal unit. This usage of the word *kha* appears also
[842] significantly in the terms 15/*a*, 17, 18/*b*, 20, 22, 32 and, as an integral part of the Khasi kinship terminology, renders it highly improbable that the Khasi matrilineal system could lave originated in ignorance of the biological function of the father. It is a significant feature in the matrilineal social system.

The terms 3 to 3/*b* refer to unmarried but biologically marriageable youths.
[881] It will be noted that there are (and were in 1914) no indications of puberty-
[584] rites for either girls or boys. There is also no child-marriage among Khasi. The use of special terms for mature, unmarried youths is therefore significant.

Term 6 — *i* as honorific article, is at the same time indicative of
[428] diminution [2], which is remarkable for two reasons : (firstly) the diminution is used for the oldest and most respected family members, like the diminution

[2] NISSOR SINGH (1906), p. 84.